

Message Text

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EXDIS FOR AMB YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT ANKARA 5572 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ATHENS
NICOSIA ADANA ISTABUL IZMIR DATED AUG 02:

QTE: CONFIDENTIAL ANKARA 5572

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MARR, TU, GR, CY
SUBJ: GOT REACTION TO HOUSE ACTION LIFTING EMBARGO

REF (A) STATE 194450 (B) STATE 194458

1. SUMMARY: ELEKDAG SEEMS TO HAVE MISREAD THE EFFECT OF THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT AND CONCLUDED THAT IT "SUSPENDS", NOT REPEALS THE EMBARGO. I THINK WE HAVE CONVINCED HIS STAFF, AT LEAST, THAT SUCH IS NOT THE CASE. WHILE THE TURKS ARE APPRECIATIVE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE AND THE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS TOWARD REPEAL, THEY HAVE SERIOUS CONCERN WITH SOME OF THE LANGUAGE WHICH EMERGED FROM THE HOUSE. WE URGED THEM TO GIVE CONFIDENTIAL

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US THEIR SPECIFIC COMMENTS AND OFFERED TO TRY TO TAKE THEIR CONCERN INTO ACCOUNT IN ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE. ECEVIT'S PUBLIC STATEMENT IS JUST OUT AND APPEARS TO BE MODERATE AND CONSTRUCTIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. I MET WITH MFA DIRGEN ELEKDAG MORNING OF AUGUST 2 TO DELIVER CARTER/ECEVIT MESSAGE (REFTEL B). WHEN I ARRIVED, ELEKDAG

WAS GOING OVER THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT WITH HIS "AMERICAN AFFAIRS" STAFF, ALI HIKMET ALP (DIRGEN, INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS), YALIM ERALP (DIRECTOR, DEFENSE AGREEMENTS), AND INAL BATU (DIRECTOR, CYPRUS/GREEK AFFAIRS). I WAS ACCCOMPANIED BY PECK.

3. ELEKDAG READ THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR IT, AND SENT IT DIRECTLY ON TO ECEVIT. ELEKDAG WANTED TO MAKE SOME "PRELIMINARY" REMARKS IN REGARD TO THE HOUSE ACTION. TURKEY APPRECIATED THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS TO REPEAL THE EMBARGO. HE NOTED THAT THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT CONTAINED SOME OF THE POSITIVE ELEMENTS WHICH HAD APPEARED IN THE SENATE VERSION. NEVERTHELESS, THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT HAD GIVEN "INTENSITY" TO SOME OF THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE SENATE BILL. HE EXPRESSED FEAR THAT THE MANNER IN WHICH THE HOUSE HAD ACTED WOULD "OPEN THE WAY" TO A LOSS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LIFTING THE EMBARGO ITSELF. HE SAID THAT THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT HAD MADE THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO CONDITIONAL, AND CONCLUDED THAT, IN HIS OPINION, THE EMBARGO WAS NOT LIFTED, IT WAS SUSPENDED.

4. I IMMEDIATELY CHALLENGED THIS CONCLUSION. FROM OUR SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION, I GATHER THAT HE AND HIS STAFF HAD HONESTLY MISINTERPRETED THE LANGUAGE OF THE AMENDMENT ITSELF, THOUGH I ALSO ALLOW FOR SOME ELEMENT OF POLITICAL PRESSURE ON US IN THEIR WILLINGNESS TO CONSTRUE THE LEGISLATION IN THIS MANNER. THEY HAD NOTED THAT THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT WOULD NOT ACTUALLY REMOVE SECTION 620 (X) FROM THE ACT AND HAD MISINTERPRETED THE EFFECT OF

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THE PRESIDENTIAL CERTIFICATION PROVIDED FOR IN PARAGRAPH ONE. THEY ASSUMED THAT SECTION 620 (X) WOULD REMAIN "SUSPENDED" ONLY AS LONG AS THE PRESIDENT WAS WILLING TO CONTINUE CERTIFYING THOSE THINGS LISTED IN PARAGRAPH ONE; THEY HAD FURTHER CONFUSED THIS WITH THE REQUIREMENT FOR PRESIDENTIAL REPORTS EVERY 60 DAYS, WHICH THEY ASSUMED WOULD TAKE THE FORM OF RENEWALS OF THIS CERTIFICATION. I THINK I WAS SUCCESSFUL IN CONVINCING ELEKDAG'S STAFF THAT THEY HAD SIMPLY MISREAD THE LEGAL LANGUAGE IN THE BILL, THOUGH THE SECGEN HIMSELF APPEARED NOT TO BE ENTIRELY CONVINCED.

5. ELEKDAG MADE THE FURTHER POINT THAT SOME TURKISH JOURNALISTS AND PORTIONS OF THE PUBLIC WERE QUITE LIKELY TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS SIMILAR TO THOSE REACHED BY HIM AND HIS STAFF. I ARGUED FORCEFULLY THAT THIS WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE AND URGED THAT THE MINISTRY AND THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT ASSURE THAT ANY SUCH MISINTERPRETATION NOT ORIGINATE WITH THEM. I POINTED OUT THAT THE PRESIDENT AND THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE EFFECT OF THE HOUSE ACTION WAS TO LIFT THE EMBARGO, AND SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT WE NOT LET A DIFFERENT IMPRESSION TAKE SHAPE.

6. ELEKDAG TICKED OFF A NUMBER OF SECTIONS OF THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT WHICH WERE PARTICULARLY NEGATIVE FROM TURKEY'S

VIEWPOINT. THESE INCLUDED:

A. PARAGRAPH B(5) WHICH DECLARIES THAT THE US "SHALL USE ITS INFLUENCE TO ACHIEVE THE WITHDRAWAL OF TURKISH MILITARY FORCES FROM CYPRUS...", ELEKDAG SAID THAT THE WORD "INFLUENCE" CARRIED THE IMPLICATION OF "STRONG-ARM TACTICS" AND WAS "OBNOXIOUS" TO THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT.

B. ELEKDAG NOTED THAT THE HOUSE VERSION HAD FAILED TO SPELL OUT THE MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THE DENKTASH/MAKARIOS AGREEMENT, THOUGH THE SENATE BILL HAD. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THIS LACK OF SPECIFICITY MIGHT ENCOURAGE THE GREEK SIDE TO TRY TO SLIP OUT OF THIS AGREEMENT.

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C. THE BYRD AMENDMENT HAD BEEN MUCH MORE BALANCED AND MORE SPECIFIC IN STATING THAT ALL THREE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SEEKING A SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM. IN THIS REGARD, HE NOTED THAT SECTION B OF THE WRIGHT AMENDMENT HAD DEALT WITH US POLICY TOWARD THE "EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN", WHILE THE COMPARABLE PASSAGE IN THE BYRD AMENDMENT HAD SPELLED THIS OUT AS GREECE, TURKEY, AND CYPRUS.

7. IN REPLY, I ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WAS LANGUAGE IN THE HOUSE BILL WHICH PRESENTED POLITICAL PROBLEMS FOR THE TURKS. I POINTED TO THE EXTREMELY CLOSE MARGIN OF VICTORY, HOWEVER, AND MADE THE POINT THAT QUITE OBVIOUSLY AN AMENDMENT MUCH MORE TO TURKEY'S LIKING WOULD PROBABLY HAVE FAILED. I SAID THAT SOME OF THE PROBLEMS TURKEY HAD WITH THIS BILL MIGHT BE RECTIFIED IN CONFERENCE, THOUGH WE COULD NOT HOLD OUT HOPE THATTHE OVERALL SHAPE OF THE LEGISLATION COULD BE CHANGED. I URGED THE TURKS TO STUDY BOTH THE SENATE AND HOUSE BILL CAREFULLY, TO IDENTIFY WHICH POINTS PRESENTED PROBLEMS TO THEM, AND TO GIVE US THIS INFORMATION ALONG WITH THEIR REASONS FOR OBJECTING TO PARTICULAR LANGUAGE. I SAID IT WAS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO EXPECT NEW OR DIFFERENT LANGUAGE TO EMERGE FROM CONFERENCE, BUT THATTHE ADMINISTRATION WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE TURKISH CONCERNS INTO ACCOUNT IN ATTEMPTING TO GET THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE TO TAKE OUT LANGUAGE OFFENSIVE TO TURKEY. ELEKDAG SAID THE MINISTRY WOULD DO THIS.

8. DURING OUR DISCUSSION, A DRAFT PUBLIC STATEMENT ARRIVED FROM ECEVIT'S OFFICE. ELEKDAG READ IT AND COMMENTED THAT IT SHOULD GIVE US NO PROBLEMS. FROM HIS DESCRIPTION OF ITS CONTENTS, I SAID IT SOUNDED LIKE JUST THE KIND OF MODERATE PUBLIC RESPONSE THAT WE WERE HOPING FOR. THE TURKISH TEXT HAS JUST BEEN RELEASED, AND WE WILL BE FORWARDING A TRANSLATION SHORTLY BY SEPTEL.

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9. COMMENT: ECEVIT STATEMENT LAYS PARTICULAR STRESS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STRONG SUPPORT FOR TURKEY SHOWN BY THE ADMINISTRATION AND MEMBERS OF BOTH THE HOUSE AND THE SENATE. IN THIS REGARD, ELEKDAG ASKED THAT HIS PERSONAL APPRECIATION BE CONVEYED TO DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER AND COUNSELOR NIMETZ FOR THEIR EFFORTS TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. THROUGHOUT THIS PROCESS, IT HAS SEEMED TO US THAT THE EXTENT OF POLITICAL SUPPORT TURKEY RECEIVED FROM THE ADMINISTRATION AND FROM MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WOULD BE ALMOST AS SIGNIFICANT AS THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO ITSELF. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE, TURKS ARE CONTINUING TO SEEK EVIDENCE THAT THERE EXISTS IN DEPTH POLITICAL SUPPORT IN WASHINGTON FOR RESTORATION OF A STRONG BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. FOR THIS REASON, GESTURES SUCH AS THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO ECEVIT ARE VERY USEFUL HERE, AND WE ADD OUR APPRECIATION FOR ITS TIMELY RECEIPT.

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